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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/913,451	08/14/2001	Detlef Stoll	P01.0271	9828
29177	7590	07/15/2005	EXAMINER	
BELL, BOYD & LLOYD, LLC			SINGH, DALZID E	
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CHICAGO, IL 60690-1135			2633	

DATE MAILED: 07/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/913,451

Applicant(s)

STOLL ET AL.

Examiner

Dalzid Singh

Art Unit

2633

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 16-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 16, 17, 23-25 and 28-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 August 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. The restriction requirement mailed 19 October 2004 has been withdrawn.
Therefore, claims 16, 17, 23-25 and 28-31 are considered for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
3. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 28, recites "a WDM demultiplexer is additionally provided designated at least for a number of the channels which corresponds to a number of tunable filters." Is the claim suggesting that the number of demultiplexer correspond to the number of channels? If this is the case, then there is not support of such limitation in the figures or the specification. Based on this, the claim is rejected as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and

Art Unit: 2633

the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 16, 17, 30 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu et al (US Patent No. 6,545,783) in view of Gerstel et al (US Patent No. 6,721,508).

Regarding claim 16, Wu et al disclose add-drop multiplexer system, as shown in Fig. 9, comprising:

a group filter (101) which divides an incoming WDM signal into a plurality of channel groups ($\lambda_1, \lambda_3, \lambda_5 \dots$ and $\lambda_2, \lambda_4, \lambda_6 \dots$) with channels of different wavelengths;

a plurality of exchangeable modules (such as elements (201, 501 and 202) and (203, 502 and 204)) each of which connect to a respective channel group ($\lambda_1, \lambda_3, \lambda_5 \dots$ and $\lambda_2, \lambda_4, \lambda_6 \dots$) for connecting through and branching off channels (add/drop switch array (501 or 502) provide connecting through and branching off channels);

the exchangeable modules comprising at least one of first, second, and third module types (the exchangeable module comprise first module types such as elements (201, 501 and 202));

the first module type being of connected-through and add-drop channels with which longer-term connections of the channels of a channel group are realized (the first module type (201, 501 and 202) is for connected-through and add-drop channels); and

a combination filter (111) to which reconfigured channel groups are fed and which forms an outgoing WDM signal.

Wu et al disclose first module type as discussed above and differ from the claimed invention in that Wu et al do not specifically disclose that the first module type

Art Unit: 2633

being for manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels.

However, manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels is well known. Gerstel et al is cited to show such well known concept. In col. 4, lines 61-67 to col. 5, lines 1-5, Gerstel et al disclose manual configuration of add-drop channels.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the first module type of Wu et al to provide manual reconfiguration functionality as taught by Gerstel et al in order to connect-through and add-drop channels. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to provide operational connect-through and add-drop capability in the event that remote controlling of the module is not operational.

Regarding claim 17, as shown in Fig. 9, Wu et al show that the first module type (201,501 and 202) comprises substantially a WDM demultiplexer (201), configurable switching unit (501), and a WDM multiplexer (202). Wu et al disclose first module type as discussed above and differ from the claimed invention in that Wu et al do not specifically disclose that the configurable switch is manually configurable switch.

However, as discussed above, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the first module type of Wu et al to provide manual reconfiguration functionality as taught by Gerstel et al in order to connect-through and add-drop channels. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to provide operational connect-through and add-drop capability in the event that remote controlling of the module is not operational.

Art Unit: 2633

Regarding claim 30, Wu et al disclose add-drop multiplexer system, as shown in Fig. 9, comprising:

a plurality of add-drop multiplexing devices (such as elements (201, 501 and 202) and (203, 502 and 204)) connected to one another via optical waveguides; and

each of the add-drop multiplexing devices comprising a group filter (101) which divides an incoming WDM signal into a plurality of channel groups ($\lambda_1, \lambda_3, \lambda_5...$ and $\lambda_2, \lambda_4, \lambda_6...$) with channels of different wavelengths, a plurality of exchangeable modules (such as elements (201, 501 and 202) and (203, 502 and 204)) each of which connects to a respective channel group for connecting through and branching off channels, the exchangeable modules comprising at least one of first, second, and third module types;

the first module type being for connected-through and add-drop channels with which longer-term connections of the channels of a channel group are realized (the first module type (201,501 and 202) is for connected-through and add-drop channels); and

a combination filter (111) to which reconfigured channel groups are fed and which forms an outgoing WDM signal.

Wu et al disclose first module type as discussed above and differ from the claimed invention in that Wu et al do not specifically disclose that the first module type being for manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels.

However, manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels is well known. Gerstel et al is cited to show such well known concept. In col. 4, lines 61-67 to col. 5, lines 1-5, Gerstel et al disclose manual configuration of add-drop channels.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time

Art Unit: 2633

the invention was made to modify the first module type of Wu et al to provide manual reconfiguration functionality as taught by Gerstel et al in order to connect-through and add-drop channels. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to provide operational connect-through and add-drop capability in the event that remote controlling of the module is not operational.

Regarding claim 31, Wu et al disclose add-drop multiplexer system, as shown in Fig. 9, comprising:

- a group unit (101) which divides an incoming WDM signal into a plurality of channel groups;

- a plurality of exchangeable modules (such as elements (201, 501 and 202) and (203, 502 and 204)) each of which connect to a respective channel group for connecting through and branching off channels;

- the exchangeable modules comprising at least one of first, second, and third module types, the first module type being for reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels with which longer-term connections of the channels of a channel group are realized (the first module type (201,501 and 202) is for connected-through and add-drop channels); and

- a combination unit (111) to which reconfigured channel groups are fed and which forms an outgoing WDM signal.

Wu et al disclose first module type as discussed above and differ from the claimed invention in that Wu et al do not specifically disclose that the first module type being for manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels.

Art Unit: 2633

However, manual reconfiguration of connected-through and add-drop channels is well known. Gerstel et al is cited to show such well known concept. In col. 4, lines 61-67 to col. 5, lines 1-5, Gerstel et al disclose manual configuration of add-drop channels.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the first module type of Wu et al to provide manual reconfiguration functionality as taught by Gerstel et al in order to connect-through and add-drop channels. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to provide operational connect-through and add-drop capability in the event that remote controlling of the module is not operational.

6. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu et al (US Patent No. 6,545,783) in view of Gerstel et al (US Patent No. 6,721,508) and further in view of Gaudino et al "Remote Provisioning of a Reconfigurable WDM Multichannel Add/Drop Multiplexer".

Regarding claim 23, as shown in Fig. 9, the combination of Wu et al and Gerstel et al shows plurality of module types (see Fig. 9 of Wu et al) and differ from the claimed invention in that the combination does not show a fourth module type which makes possible a remote configuration of drop-continue channels. However, remote configuration of drop-continue channels is well known. Gaudino et al teach such well known concept (see abstract). Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide remote configuration as taught by Gaudino et al to the system of the combination. One of

Art Unit: 2633

ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to provide flexibility of drop-continue of the signal.

7. Claims 24, 25, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu et al (US Patent No. 6,545,783) in view of Gerstel et al (US Patent No. 6,721,508) in view of Gaudino et al "Remote Provisioning of a Reconfigurable WDM Multichannel Add/Drop Multiplexer" and further in view of Liu et al (US Patent No. 6,208,443).

Regarding claim 24, the combination of Wu et al, Gerstel et al and Gaudino et al differ from the claimed invention in that the combination does not disclose that the fourth module type has a coupling device for coupling out at least part of the incoming WDM signal and a circulator and also at least one tunable filter. However, it is well known to form drop-continue functionality using circulators and tunable filters. Liu et al is cited to show such well known concept. In Fig. 5, Liu et al show circulator (404) and tunable filter (402) for drop-continue functionality. Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide drop-continue functionality using circulators and tunable filters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to reduce crosstalk between channels.

Regarding claim 25, the combination of Wu et al, Gerstel et al and Gaudino et al show at least one filter arrangement acting as a WDM demultiplexer for separating the coupled-out WDM signal into a plurality of channels of different wavelength (see Fig. 9 of Wu et al).

Art Unit: 2633

Regarding claim 28 (as far as understood), the combination of Wu et al, Gerstel et al and Gaudino et al differ from the claimed invention in that the combination does not disclose a WDM demultiplexer and a number of the tunable filters. However, it is well known to form drop-continue functionality using demultiplexer and tunable filters. Liu et al is cited to show such well known concept. In Fig. 5, Liu et al show tunable filter (402) and demultiplexer (512) for drop-continue functionality. Therefore, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide drop-continue functionality using tunable filters and demultiplexer. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do such in order to separate each channel.

Regarding claim 29, as shown in Fig. 9, Wu et al show that the channels of at least one of the channel groups are adjacent in terms of frequency (the channels are spaced closely together, therefore the channels are adjacent).

8. Claims 18-22, 26 and 27 have not been examined for the following reason:

The independent claim 1, recites "the exchangeable modules comprising at least one of first, second, and third modules types;" Based on this claim, only one of the three module types is required. Therefore, for the purpose of examination, the first module is selected. Claims 18-22, 26 and 27 which relate to the second module and third module have not been considered for examination.

Art Unit: 2633

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Milton et al (US Patent No. 6,631,018) is cited to show WDM optical network with passive pass-through at each node.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dalzid Singh whose telephone number is (571) 272-3029. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jason Chan can be reached on (571) 272--3022. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DS

July 13, 2005

Dalzid Singh